

**Fathead minnow**

*Pimephales promelas*



**Similar Species:** Many other minnows and some suckers

**Identification:** Blunt rounded snout, barbels absent, lateral line incomplete, scales largest near tail and becoming smaller toward head.

The fathead minnow is the most common minnow of the prairie region and inhabits rivers, lakes, and wetlands. It is an important commercial species sold as a popular bait fish and is very hardy in the minnow bucket. Fathead minnows are often stocked in ponds as food for sport fishes, but they will quickly be eliminated if largemouth bass are abundant. Fathead minnows eat algae and zooplankton and will take aquatic insects. During the spawning period, male fathead minnows become dark, especially around the head.

Eggs are laid on the underside of floating or suspended objects such as floating boards, root wads, and aquatic plant leaves. Average size of adult fathead minnows is 1 1/2 to 3 inches.

